

Illinois Discharged Servicemember Task Force

2016 Annual Report







DISCHRGED SERVICEMEMBERS TASK FORCE ANNUAL REPORT FY16

Table of Contents

2
3
4
5
5
6
8
1C
12
12
13
14
15
16





Letter from the Director

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs is pleased to present this year's Discharged Servicemembers Task Force Annual Report. The stakeholders who drove this year's mission forward dedicated countless hours and resources to ensure the most relevant and timely issues facing veterans are captured and explored. We've spent the last year on a journey to delve deep into the issues that impact our veterans throughout the state. We assembled a team comprised of subject matter experts who serve the interests of veterans in multiple arenas. Each contributor brought a valuable and unique perspective to the table- helping us to develop the best recommendations possible.

This year we explored the following topics: Veteran Treatment Courts, Military Learning Credit, Defining a "Veteran" in terms of benefit and eligibility, and Access to Mental Health Care. While these topics won't cure all the ills that plague the veteran community; they do offer substantive recommendations for addressing challenges for the veterans who are transitioning home to Illinois. It was a pleasure working with this year's Task Force and I hope this report will serve as a guide for lawmakers looking to make a difference in the lives of our nation's heroes.

Best Wishes,

Erica Jeffries

The Charge

Pursuant to Public Act 95-294, effective August 20, 2007, the State of Illinois created the Illinois Discharged Servicemember Task Force (DSTF). The mission of DSTF is to investigate the re-entry process for servicemembers who return to civilian life after being engaged in an active theatre. In order to accomplish this mission, DSTF convenes a team of experienced, professional veteran advocates, and community leaders to analyze major issue areas and develop strategic policy recommendations. DSTF's strategic policy recommendations are published yearly in the DSTF Annual Report.

In accordance with the Act, DSTF members include:

A representative of the IDVA, who shall chair the committee;

A representative from the Illinois Department of Military Affairs;

A representative from the Office of the Illinois Attorney General;

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the House;

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the House Minority Leader;

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the President of the Senate;

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the Senate Minority Leader;

4 members chosen by the Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs,

who shall represent statewide veterans' organizations or veterans' homeless shelters;

One member appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; and

A representative of the USDVA shall be invited to participate.

Year in Review

In Fiscal Year 2016, DSTF held meetings on:

- Dec 11, 2015 Jesse Brown VA Medical Center
- Feb 1, 2016 Will County Veterans Assistance Commission
- Apr 4, 2016 Dupage County Veterans Assistance Commission
- Jun 9, 2016 Pritzker Military Library and Museum

DSTF focused on opportunities to enhance the lives of veterans in the state, build greater collaboration among veteran-serving organizations, and identify practical, cost-minimal solutions to optimize service delivery to veterans and their families. As such, agency executives, elected officials, and leaders in the veteran community have utilized DSTF's expert guidance to:

- Synergize, re-tool, and build the capacity of existing programs;
- Introduce and advance well-grounded legislation;
- Launch new outreach and advocacy efforts; and
- Build collaborative partnerships between key stakeholder organizations both inside and outside the veteran community.

Membership

ILLINOIS DISCHARGED SERVICEMEMBER TASK FORCE (FY 2016)

Director Erica Jeffries

Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (Chair)

Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Rochelle

Deputy J9, Illinois Department of Military Affairs

Mr. Thomas Banning

Military and Veterans Rights Bureau Chief, Office of the Illinois Attorney General

Representative Linda Chapa LaVia

State Representative, 83rd District

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the House;

Representative Jeanne Ives

State Representative, 42nd District

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the House Minority Leader;

Senator Michael Hastings

State Senator, 19th District

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the President of the Senate;

Senator Pamela Althoff

State Senator, 32nd District

A member of the General Assembly appointed by the Senate Minority Leader;

Sergeant Major Mark W. Bowman

Illinois National Guard

Mr. Kevin Hull

Executive Director, Westside Institute for Science & Education

Mr. Kenneth Clarke

President & Chief Executive Officer, Pritzker Military Library & Museum

Mr. Paul Knudtson

Vice-President of Development, Student Veterans of America Illinois

Appointed by the IDVA, representing statewide veterans' organizations or veterans' homeless shelters

Mr. Jim Frazier

Gold Star Father and Survivor Outreach Services Officer, U.S. Army

A member appointed by the Lieutenant Governor

Ms. Mary Ann Romeo

MSSW, VISN 12 Care Coordinator, USDVA

Ms. Suzanne Nunziata

Chicago VBA Regional Office Director, USDVA

Representatives of the USDVA

Recommendations



Veterans Treatment Court

Issue

Through P.A. 96-924, the General Assembly recognized, "that veterans and active, Reserve and National Guard servicemembers have provided or are currently providing an invaluable service to our country. In so doing, some may suffer the effects of, including but not limited to, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, depression, and may also suffer drug and alcohol dependency or addiction and co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse problems. As a result of this, some veterans or active duty servicemembers come into contact with the criminal justice system and are charged with felony or misdemeanor offenses."

Veterans Treatment Courts provide the criminal justice system the vehicle through which "justice can recognize these veterans, provide accountability for their wrongdoing, provide for the safety of the public, and provide for the treatment of our veterans."

The General Assembly enabled Veterans Treatment Courts to "meet the specialized problems faced by these veteran and servicemember defendants."

Key Statistics

- In 2011-12, an estimated 181,500 veterans (8% of all inmates in state and federal prison and local jail excluding military-operated facilities) were serving time in correctional facilities.
- More than three-quarters (77%) of incarcerated veterans received military discharges that were honorable or under honorable conditions.
- Incarcerated veterans who saw combat (60% in prison and 67% in jail) were more likely than noncombat veterans (44% in prison and 49% in jail) to have been told they had a mental disorder.
- From 2001 to 2012, veterans discharged during Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn accounted for 13% of veterans in prison and 25% of veterans in jail.(Veterans in Prison and Jail, 2011–2012, Bureau of Justice Statistics)

Recommendations

Establishment of a working group

With the passing of House Bill 5003 (amends the Veterans and Servicemembers Court Treatment Act to provide that the Chief Judge of each judicial circuit shall [rather than may] establish a Veterans and Servicemembers Court program including a format under which it operates under the Act), this body recommends establishing a working group to explore best practices of Veterans Treatment Courts. Data driven information will be a key component contributing to a successful roll out in 2018.

Working group composition and scope.

The working group should be comprised of key members from the state's current veteran treatment courts, including, but not limited to, judges, service providers, and veterans whom successfully completed the Veterans Treatment Court track. In an effort reduce the strain and burden placed on counties to enact these courts, the working group should produce a report of best practices with the intent of supporting counties creating these courts.

Implementation

Establishment of a working group

The General Assembly or the Governor can assemble the requisite stakeholders, for the purpose of, creating a document that will provide counties with best practices on how Veteran Treatment Courts can effectively and efficiently serve veterans. We believe this to be a vital step ensuring that none of our servicemembers returning home from combat fall through the cracks and receive the support they need.

In addition, John Marshall Veterans Legal Support Center and Clinic is currently leading an initiative to capture and analyze data relating to the effectiveness and impact existing Veterans Treatment Courts have in Illinois on the individual, their family, their community, and our State. They can be a valuable partner in this process.

Military Learning Credit Issue

Education can be a vital component to ease a servicemember's transition from the military to the civilian workforce. Accurate and honest evaluations of the significant range of knowledge and skills veterans have acquired during their service to this country can help accelerate the process for veterans to earn the credentials needed to succeed in the civilian labor market. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) refers to a set of longstanding, validated methods to assess learning gained in nontraditional settings, like the military, for college credit or licensure. A recent survey of Illinois colleges and universities found that, based on a 44% response rate, the majority of reporting institutions offered some form of PLA but only 5 of the 17 methods were offered by half of the institutions (Military Prior Learning Assessment Policies and Practices at Illinois Postsecondary Institutions). Policies around application of PLA credit and transfer policies also varied considerably. This opens the door for veterans to waste time and money taking classes in subjects they already know when educational institutions and certifying bodies fail to recognize appropriate military training and experiential learning.



In a recent scan of military PLA practices in Illinois CAEL, the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, reported that 23 percent of responding Illinois institutions post credit recommendations from a Joint Services Transcripts as block credit. This practice is done whether or not the credit is necessary for completion of the student's program of study. Excess credits on a transcript which are not applied to a student's program of study can cause issues with the student's ability to be awarded financial aid due to rules surrounding Standards of Academic Progress (SAP) thus keeping students from accessing all possible benefits and assistance. DSTF recommends that institutions consider adopting a policy that protects against the transcription of excess credits for veteran students.

In addition to recognition of military learning, another important issue is, how veterans are financially supported in the state. Illinois is generous to its veterans, offering education grants to qualified veterans. The Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) waives tuition and fees for students who meet the eligibility criteria at public universities and community colleges in Illinois. These tuition and fee waivers are classified by the state as entitlement programs and are administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). When funds are not appropriated to ISAC for these programs, the institutions must cover the costs of the benefit. The IVG program is costly, this financial obligation makes it difficult for public universities and community colleges to invest in other important services vital to veterans' success on campus.

Key Statistics

- Illinois Veterans Grant cost \$26.8 million in FY 2016 (Illinois Board Of Higher Education)
- Over 305,000 veterans accessed federal education benefits in Illinois in 2015 (Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, SAA).
- Over 23,000 veterans received Post-9/11 education benefits in Illinois in 2015 (Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, SAA).

Recommendations

Funding the Illinois Veterans Grant

Providing full funding for the Illinois Veteran Grant would remove the financial burden from Illinois public universities and community colleges who have been shouldering the full cost of this state aid program in recent years. Without this financial burden, Illinois' public institutions would be able to devote more resources to innovative practices, such as prior learning assessment (PLA) programs that would ultimately save time and money for student veterans as they pursue career credentials.

Reestablishing the Military Training Counts Initiative

The Military Training Counts program is a collaborative pilot effort to articulate military training to credentials and/or state licensure at select public higher education institutions. Public Act 97-710, the Expedited Licensure for Service Members and Spouses Act requires that," [a]II relevant training provided by the military and completed by a service member shall be credited to that service member as meeting any training or education requirement under any applicable occupational or professional licensing Act, provided that the training or education is determined . . . to be substantially equivalent to that required under any applicable Act and is not otherwise contrary to any other licensure requirement." A reevaluation of military occupations with the goal of aligning them with state licenses, to enable veterans to fully benefit from the aforementioned act can lead to new opportunities for veterans to find meaningful employment in a career field in which they are already trained.

Prohibiting Block Transcription

Prohibiting block transcription would ease the burden of veterans entering colleges and universities with transferable credit from their military experience. Academic institutions that have not adopted a policy that protects against the transcription of excess credits for student veterans are placing them in a position where they could lose financial support for their education.

Implementation

Funding the Illinois Veterans Grant

The General Assembly can appropriate funding to ISAC to cover the financial cost accrued by public colleges and universities for providing veterans with the IVG.

Reestablishing the Military Training Counts Initiative

Reenacting Executive Order 13-02 to address additional workforce-aligned areas, as well as, examining the articulation of military training to a 4-year college and university programs. Emphasis should be placed on

stackable credential pathways leading veterans to career and further educational opportunities. In addition, Military Training Counts is currently supported by a small grant from the Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit. DSTF recommends state financial support to sustain and expand this initiative.

Prohibiting Block Transcription

The General Assembly can pass legislation requiring that all Illinois public universities and colleges award credit for prior military learning, Joint Services Transcript credit recommendations, the Community College of Air Force transcript, and DD-214s only when the credit will be applied to the student's program of study at the time of the credit evaluation.

Definition of a Veteran

There are many men and women who pledge themselves to service that never make it to the battlefield. They raise their right hand like many veterans, but are not acknowledged because they were never called to active duty. Establishing the definition of an Illinois Veteran (National Guardsmen or Reservists, primarily who only attended weekend drill and their two week annual training, who doesn't qualify as a Veteran under the Federal definition of a Veteran under Title 10), would do a couple of things:

- 1. It would give the National Guardsmen and Reservists official recognition as a Veteran which they sorely deserve and
- 2. It would allow access to some state benefits, that are currently only available to Veterans who were federalized for active duty and who served under Title 10.

Federal Benefits would not be affected with this definition.



Currently, any Illinois National Guardsman or Reservists, who drill once a month, and who is never activated for federal service under Title 10 and who doesn't have at least 180 days of active federal service, is not considered a veteran. Any National Guardsman who is activated for State level active duty under Title 32 is not considered a veteran. A Full-Time National Guardsman working under Title 32 is not considered a veteran. These personnel are not eligible for nearly every federal benefit and most state benefits. By establishing a definition of an Illinois Veteran, they could receive some state benefits and the recognition they deserve.

Key Statistics

- Illinois Warrior Assistance Program served 9,213 unique web users in FY15(Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs' Annual Report)
- Illinois National Guard has approximately 13,000 members (Illinois Department of Military Affairs).

Recommendations

• Define veteran for State of Illinois recognition purposes.

The individuals who meet the criteria defined below should be recognized as veteran in the State of Illinois.

"Any National Guardsman/Reservist who is Federally/State Activated, OR has completed his/her full term of enlistment for enlisted personnel /obligation for officers, AND has a discharge characterized as Honorable or Under Honorable Conditions is considered a veteran in the State of Illinois."

· Changing eligibility for certain state benefits to include individuals who meet the definition above.

Grave Registration

IDVA currently maintains a Roll of Honor of all veterans buried in the State of Illinois. Every person, firm, or corporation owning or controlling any cemetery or burial place in this state is required to keep a permanent record of the burial of each U.S. war veteran or memorial marker erected for this purpose. With this new definition, Illinois National Guardsmen and Reservists should be allowed to have their names on a separate Roll of Honor.

State Veterans Employment Preference

Under State law, qualified veterans are entitled to points added to a passing grade and appointment preference. Illinois National Guard/Reserves non-activated only receive points added to a passing grade. With this new definition, Illinois National Guardsmen and Reservist will be allowed to have points added to their grade regardless of it being passing.

IDES Job Assistance

The Illinois Department of Employment Security assists veterans in finding gainful employment. Their staff provides veterans with priority of service for employment services (does not apply to unemployment insurance). In addition, they have nearly 40 offices located throughout Illinois with Employment Specialists available to provide a full array of services to assist veterans. With this new definition, Illinois National Guardsmen and Reservists will be allowed to receive priority of service for employment services.

IL Driver's License

To receive the "VETERAN" designation on the driver's license/ID card, veterans must obtain official certification from the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA). They can do so by one of two means. They can visit one of the IDVA offices throughout the state and provide a copy of their DD-214 or Certification of Military Service (NA Form 13038) or they may complete the process by mail. With this new definition, Illinois National Guardsmen and Reservists will be able to put "Veteran" on their driver's license and/or ID Card.

Illinois Warrior Assistance Program (IWAP)

The Illinois Warrior Assistance Program (IWAP) provides confidential assistance for returning Illinois veterans as they transition back to daily living after serving our country. IWAP is also available to family members including the spouse and child(ren) of eligible veterans.

Eligible veterans are:

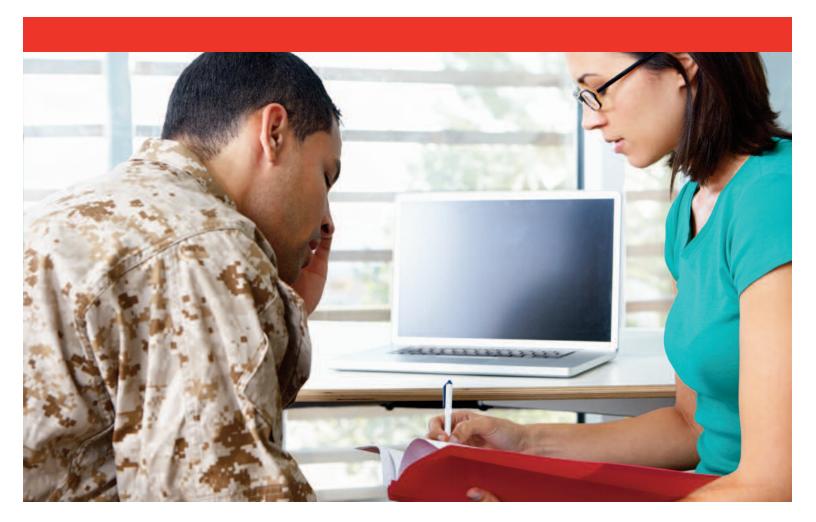
- Under the age of 65
- · Has served a minimum of 180 days of active duty service with an Active Duty, Reserve, or National Guard unit
- Illinois resident
- Is not an inmate of public institution or a resident of a nursing facility

With this new definition, Illinois National Guardsmen and Reservists will be eligible for this program.

Implementation

Define veteran for State of Illinois recognition purposes.

The General Assembly can enact legislation establishing the "Definition of a Veteran" for the purposes of the State of Illinois, outlining specifically what services the new definition would make them eligible for.



Access to Mental Health Care

Issue

Not every veteran suffers from post-traumatic stress as a result of their service, for those that do, getting access to the mental health care services necessary for healing can be a daunting experience. This issue is compounded for veterans residing in more rural regions of the state. Finding providers who possess the sensitivity for this unique experience is a rarity, if not impossible to find. "Specifically, rural veterans have lower health-related quality-of-life scores and experience a higher prevalence of physical illness compared to urban veterans. While the prevalence of most mental health disorders is lower for rural compared to urban veterans, rural veterans with mental health disorders are sicker as measured by lower health-related quality-of-life compared with urban veterans." (Strategic Plan Refresh Fiscal Years 2012-2014)

Comprehensive access to behavioral healthcare is universally fragmented; however the research base has demonstrated that the problems of access for rural areas are unique and distinct from those more urban and metropolitan. Rural areas characterized by low population density, a limited and fragile economic base, cultural diversity, high levels of poverty, and limited access to cities, have incidents of serious mental and behavioral health problems (depression, suicide, alcohol and substance abuse) equal to or greater than urban areas. More troubling is the insufficient volume and range of services available to treat mental and behavioral health problems in rural areas. (Rural Behavioral Healthcare: Barriers, Effective Policy Strategies, and Best Practices)

In addition to these shortages, the turnover rate for service providers is high, and providers that remain often express feelings of isolation from other health professionals. Policies specifically tailored to the needs of Service Members, Veterans, and their Families in rural communities by rural providers must be developed.

The barriers to behavioral healthcare include the following:

- Social stigma of behavioral health illness, and mistrust of health professionals in rural communities.
- Lack of integration or communication of mental health, substance use disorders and primary care.
- Lack of trained staff members/providers/clinicians.
- Lack of continuing educational opportunities (i.e. for RN's to become Nurse Clinicians with a psychiatric specialty and an ability to prescribe medications).

Key Statistics

- Rural Veterans represent 41 percent of the total enrolled Veteran population in VA health care system. Around 30 percent of those enrolled rural Veterans served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) and Operation New Dawn.(Characteristics of Rural Veterans: 2010)
- In Illinois, it is estimated that 156,031 (19%) veterans live in rural areas.
- In Illinois, 17% of all rural veterans are Post 9/11. (Total Vet Population 18 Years or Older, by State and Geographic Component)

Recommendations

Support Existing and New Tele-health Initiatives.

Leveraging technology to provide access to mental health care for veterans would pay great dividends towards the removal of physical, mental, and emotional barriers that prevent rural veterans from receiving essential services.

Support Existing and New Workforce Recruitment and Retention Efforts
 Incentivizing mental health care professional with experience working with the veteran population to provide services in rural communities could reduce access issues.

Implementation

Support existing and new tele-health Initiatives.

The General Assembly and Directors of state agencies can identify legal barriers that currently impede implementing tele-health initiatives.

Support existing and new workforce recruitment and retention efforts

The General Assembly can enact legislation that creates incentives for mental health care workers in rural areas including tuition reimbursements, tax credits, and travel reimbursements.



Appendices

Appendix A

Roll call for the meeting of the Discharged Servicemember Task Force

Discharged Servicemembers Task Force Meeting December 11, 2015 Jesse Brown VA Medical Center 820 S. Damen Avenue Chicago, II 60612

Members Present:

Chairman Erica Jeffries, Director, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs
Honorable Linda Chapa LaVia, Representative, 83rd District (Phone)
Honorable Jeanne Ives, Representative, 42nd District (Phone)
Kevin Hull, Executive Director, Westside Institute for Science & Education
Paul Knudtson, Vice-President of Development, Student Veterans of America Illinois (Phone)

Members Not Present:

Honorable Michael Hastings, Senator, 19th District
Honorable Pamela Althoff, Senator, 32nd District
Suzanne Nunziata, Chicago VBA Regional Office Director, USDVA
Sergeant Major Mark W. Bowman, State Command Sergeant Major, Illinois National Guard
Ken Clarke, President, Pritzker Military Library and Museum
Thomas Banning, Military and Veterans Rights Bureau Chief, Office of the Illinois Attorney General
Jim Frazier, Gold Star Father and Survivor Outreach Services Officer, U.S. Army

Guest:

Victor LaGroon, Director of Veterans' Affairs, City of Chicago

Amy Sherman, Associate VP for Innovation and Policy, Council for Adult and Experimental Learning (Phone)

Abundio "AL" Zaragoza, Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County

Steven Fixler, Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Dupage County

Kristi McNichol, Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois

Christopher LaFayelle, Chief Inspiration Officer, Consortium for Veteran Contractors, (Phone)

Matt Eddington, Assistant General Counsel, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (Phone)

Emanuel Johnson, Program Manager, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Appendix B

Roll call for the meeting of the Discharged Servicemember Task Force

Discharged Servicemembers Task Force Meeting February 1, 2016 Will County Veterans Assistance Commission 2400 Glenwood AVE Suite 110 Joliet IL 60435

Members Present:

Chairman Erica Jeffries, Director, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Kevin Hull, Executive Director, Westside Institute for Science & Education (Phone)

Thomas Banning, Military and Veterans Rights Bureau Chief, Office of the Illinois Attorney General (Phone)

Honorable Michael Hastings, Senator, 19th District (Phone)

Susanne Nunziata (for Suzanne DeNeau-Galley)

Jim Frazier, Gold Star Father and Survivor Outreach Services Officer, U.S. Army

Members Not Present:

Paul Knudtson, Vice-President of Development, Student Veterans of America Illinois

Honorable Linda Chapa LaVia, Representative, 83rd District

Honorable Jeanne Ives, Representative, 42nd District

Sergeant Major Mark W. Bowman, State Command Sergeant Major, Illinois National Guard

Ken Clarke, President, Pritzker Military Library and Museum

Paul Knudtson, Vice-President of Development, Student Veterans of America Illinois

Guest:

Honorable Pat McGuire, Senator, 43rd District

Amy Sherman, Associate VP for Innovation and Policy, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (Phone)

Megan Everett, Director of Veteran Programs, Robert F. McCormick Foundation (Phone)

James Flagg, Co-Founder, Warrior Summit Coalition (Phone)

Steven Fixler, Superintendent, Dupage County Veterans Assistance Commission

Kristi McNichol, Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois

Master Sergeant Shawn Doty, United States Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment (Phone)

Brian Clauss, Director, John Marshall Veterans Legal Support Center and Clinic

Erik Papineau, Asst. Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois

Tommy Haire, Director, EXTRA Mile,

Howard Robinson, State Command Sergeant Major (Retired), Illinois National Guard (Phone)

Emanuel Johnson, Program Manager, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Appendix C

Roll call for the meeting of the Discharged Servicemember Task Force

Discharged Servicemembers Task Force Meeting April 4, 2016 Veterans Assistance Commission of DuPage County 421 N. County Farm Rd. Wheaton, IL 60187

Members Present:

Chairman Erica Jeffries, Director, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Honorable Pamela Althoff, Senator, 32nd District (Phone)

Honorable Michael Hastings, Senator, 19th District (Command Sergeant Major Howard Robinson (Phone)

Honorable Jeanne Ives, Representative, 42nd District (Phone) (John Augustynowicz)

Ken Clarke, President, Pritzker Military Library and Museum (Phone)

Kevin Hull, Executive Director, Westside Institute for Science & Education (Phone)

Thomas Banning, Military and Veterans Rights Bureau Chief, Office of the Illinois Attorney General

Jim Frazier, Gold Star Father and Survivor Outreach Services Officer, U.S. Army

Members Not Present:

Honorable Linda Chapa LaVia, Representative, 83rd District

Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Rochelle, Deputy J9, Illinois Department of Military Affairs

Sergeant Major Mark W. Bowman, State Command Sergeant Major, Illinois National Guard (Deployed)

Paul Knudtson, Vice-President of Development, Student Veterans of America Illinois (Deployed)

Guest:

Megan Everett, Director of Veteran Programs, Robert F. McCormick Foundation (Phone)

Amanda Winters, Assistant Director, Illinois Board of Higher Education (Phone)

Matt Roberts, General Council, Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs

Amy Sherman, Associate VP for Innovation and Policy, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (Phone)

James Flagg, Co-Founder, Warrior Summit Coalition (Phone)

Steven Fixler, Superintendent, Dupage County Veterans Assistance Commission

Kristi McNichol, Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois (Phone)

Master Sergeant Shawn Doty, United States Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment (Phone)

Brian Clauss, Director, John Marshall Veterans Legal Support Center and Clinic

Howard Robinson, State Command Sergeant Major (Retired), Illinois National Guard (Phone)

Emanuel Johnson, Program Manager, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Colonel Richard V. Smith USAF (RET), Military Officers Association of America

Robert Norman, President, Southwest Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

Ed Kneip, American Legion Post 556, Cantigny

Michael Mero, American Legion Post 76, Wheaton

David Darroch, United Service Organizations Illinois

Erik Papineau, Asst. Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois (Phone)

Susan F. Giannone, Constituent Services Advocate, Rep. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL8)

Appendix D

Roll call for the meeting of the Discharged Servicemember Task Force

Discharged Servicemembers Task Force Meeting June 9, 2016 Pritzker Military Library and Museum 104 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago, IL 60603

Members Present:

Chairman Erica Jeffries, Director, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Honorable Pamela Althoff, Senator, 32nd District (Phone)

Honorable Michael Hastings, Senator, 19th District (Command Sergeant Major Howard Robinson)

Honorable Jeanne Ives, Representative, 42nd District

Ken Clarke, President, Pritzker Military Library and Museum

Kevin Hull, Executive Director, Westside Institute for Science & Education

Members Not Present:

Honorable Linda Chapa LaVia, Representative, 83rd District

Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Rochelle, Deputy J9, Illinois Department of Military Affairs

Sergeant Major Mark W. Bowman, State Command Sergeant Major, Illinois National Guard (Deployed)

Paul Knudtson, Vice-President of Development, Student Veterans of America Illinois (Deployed)

Jim Frazier, Gold Star Father and Survivor Outreach Services Officer, U.S. Army

Thomas Banning, Military and Veterans Rights Bureau Chief, Office of the Illinois Attorney General

Guest:

Matt Roberts, General Council, Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs

Amy Sherman, Associate VP for Innovation and Policy, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (Phone)

James Flagg, Co-Founder, Warrior Summit Coalition

Steven Fixler, Superintendent, Dupage County Veterans Assistance Commission

Kristi McNichol, Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois (Phone)

Brian Clauss, Director, John Marshall Veterans Legal Support Center and Clinic

Emanuel Johnson, Program Manager, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Erik Papineau, Asst. Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois (Phone)

Steve Ruohomaki, Program Director, Extra Mile

Mark Rosenberg, John Marshall Veterans Legal Support Center and Clinic

Darienne Page Rakestraw, Chicago Economic Liaison, Veterans Economic Communities Initiative

Alison Ruble, President & CEO, United Service Organizations Illinois

Victor LaGroon, Director of Veterans' Affairs, City of Chicago

Howard Robinson, State Command Sergeant Major (Retired), Illinois National Guard



Special Thanks

There have been a number of individuals that were not appointed to the Task Force, but put in countless hours to make this all come together. We want to take the time out to acknowledge them here:

Amy Sherman, Associate VP for Innovation and Policy, Council for Adult and Experimental Learning Brain Clauss, Director, John Marshall Veterans Legal Support Center and Clinic Erik Papineau, Asst. Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois Howard Robinson, State Command Sergeant Major (Retired), Illinois National Guard James Flagg, Co-Founder, Warrior Summit Coalition Kristi McNichol, Superintendent, Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Illinois Steven Fixler, Superintendent, Dupage County Veterans Assistance Commission Victor LaGroon, Director of Veterans' Affairs, City of Chicago



